

Remarks/Arguments

In response to the Office action of 8 March 2005, all of the pending claims, claims 1-14 have been cancelled and new claims 15-30 presented for examination. The new claims are supported by the application as originally filed; no new matter has been introduced.

In the March 8, 2005 Office action, claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,112,502 to Frederick. The restocking function of Frederick is found in column 50, line 30 through column 52, line 3. It is respectfully submitted that the restocking function of Frederick does not anticipate new claims 15-30.

As seen in column 50, at line 55, the user in Frederick must enter the quantity of medical items currently stored in the position being inventoried. As discussed in Frederick beginning at line 60:

The requirement to input existing quantities is only carried out for medical items which are itemized and counted. For non-itemized items where absolute quantities are not a concern, the reading device is preferably configured to enable a user to avoid the input of current position quantities.

The current position quantity information is useful for counted and itemized inventory items as it can be compared to information stored in the data store 326 to verify that dispense events have been properly recorded.

In addition, the user must enter the quantity to be restocked. As discussed at column 51, beginning at line 7:

After a user has input the current position quantity at process 402, the logic next moves to process 404 in which the user enters the quantity which is being restocked in the storage location. The user is preferably prompted to do this by prompts presented on the display 350.

Frederick handles below par or out of stock situations by having a unique bar code representative of such conditions. As discussed at column 51, beginning at line 43:

Alternatively, a prefix bar code indicia representative of a "below minimum" with location indicia, or an "out of stock" indicia at a location may be scanned at any time.

In contrast, in the claimed invention, a bin or storage location is first identified. Then, the current quantity or inventory of items remaining in that bin or location is input. Thereafter, the user is relieved of any further operations. The user need not know the par value of that item for that location or any other information. After the location and current quantity are provided, the system automatically compares the current quantity to a par level of that item, and the restocking package is generated in response to that comparison. It is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention is simpler to operate from the user's

Appl. No.: 10/820,209
Amdt. Dated: 6 July 2005
Reply to Office action of 8 March 2005

stand point, enables the "back end" processes to be carried out seamlessly, and ensures that the proper item count is available at each location within the shelving system.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the instant application in condition for allowance. Accordingly an early favorable Office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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